

ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER TRAINEE
ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER

Class No. 005707
Class No. 005703

DEFINITION:

To patrol a designated area to enforce animal control laws and ordinances, issue citations, impound animals; and to perform related work.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:

The Animal Control Officer class series is allocated to the Department of Animal Services, and is responsible for the enforcement of a wide variety of state laws and local ordinances regulating the possession, humane treatment, handling, confinement, transportation, use and disposal of animals. This class differs from other law enforcement classes in that the Animal Control Officer classes are non-sworn peace officers, but may exercise the power of arrest, serve warrants and use firearms to tranquilize animals. Animal Control Officer classes differ from Animal Care Attendants in that the latter perform manual work and animal care work at an animal shelter.

Animal Control Officer Trainee:

This is the entry-level class in this series. Under immediate supervision, incumbents learn to perform progressively more independent and responsible animal control fieldwork. Animal Control Officer Trainees do not issue citations or use a firearm.

Animal Control Officer:

This is the journey-level class in this class series. Under general supervision, incumbents handle the full range of animal control work and provide technical guidance and training to Animal Control Trainees. This class differs from the Supervising Animal Control Officer in that the latter is responsible for supervising the day-to-day operations of an animal shelter.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES:

Drives a radio-dispatched animal control vehicle to patrol assigned areas; responds to citizen complaints and investigates alleged violations of animal laws and regulatory ordinances; drives to designated addresses or described geographic locations and attempts to locate animal(s) reported; talks with the public to determine animal identity and ownership; visually inspects animal(s) to determine medical condition, care received, and decides on most appropriate course of action to prevent inhumane treatment of animals; educates the public on issues such as humane animal treatment standards, anti-cruelty laws and responsible pet ownership; advises and explains laws and regulations related to the control, licensing, vaccination, adoption and care of animals; issues warnings; sets-up return inspection calls to ensure compliance with laws and ordinances; picks-up and impounds stray, sick, injured, unwanted and abandoned animals; transports animal(s) to animal shelter, veterinary hospital or other facility as needed; performs euthanasia on animal(s) in the field as needed; keeps record of daily activities and enters into a computer; cleans and maintains equipment used in the performance of duties; assists other patrol officers with work; may sell animal licenses and collect fees; and performs other duties as assigned.

Animal Control Officer:

All the duties listed above and: investigates animal bites; captures or kills, as necessary, suspected rabid and/or unrestrained vicious animals; operates a tranquilizer gun to subdue animals; quarantines potentially rabid animals; issues citations for violation of quarantine; subdues or captures aggressive dogs in order to allow Sheriff, police, Medical Examiner, etc., to perform their duties; assists at traffic accidents, crime scenes or disasters to control, capture, transport, and euthanize animals; works with other agencies to ensure that animal control laws and regulations are enforced; impounds illegal or dangerous animals such as poisonous snakes, fighting cocks, skunks, monkeys, exotic birds, felines; issues citations to animal owners whose loose animals may cause accidents or property damage; does call-backs, investigative work and produces written reports; issues citations and provides testimony at administrative and court hearings; helps train Animal Control Officer Trainees; may inspect businesses with guard dogs, kennels, stables, ranches and corrals for proper fencing, sanitation, humane animal treatment and licensing purposes; and performs other duties as assigned.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

Knowledge Level: T = Thorough; G = General; -- = Not Applicable

Classification Level: TR = Animal Control Officer Trainee
 ACO = Animal Control Officer

Knowledge of:

TR ACO

G	G	Department policies, practices and procedures.
G	T	Physical and behavioral characteristics of common dogs, cats, and livestock.
G	T	Animal care, feeding and handling.
G	T	Record keeping methods and filing.
G	T	Common disease symptoms in domestic animals.
G	T	Chemical/cleaning agents used to disinfect and sanitize equipment.
--	T	Methods and techniques of humane euthanasia.
--	T	Laws, regulations and ordinances governing animal impound, release, quarantine and destruction.
--	T	Legal liabilities and responsibilities of those involved with the enforcement of animal control regulations.
--	T	Methods and techniques of investigation including rules of evidence, laws of arrest, and court procedures.

The following skills and abilities apply to both classes:

Skills and Abilities to:

- Comprehend, interpret and enforce animal control regulatory ordinances and state laws.
- Analyze solutions and apply established procedures to enforce animal control and anti-cruelty laws.
- Comprehend and apply regulations governing licensing, rabies abatement and prevention.
- Humanely euthanize animals.
- Recognize normal and abnormal animal behavior.
- Handle, catch, restrain, confine and transport animals using methods, techniques and/or special equipment.
- Issue written warnings.
- Patrol designated areas daily for long periods of time.
- Utilize tact, self-restrain, judgment and strategy in dealing with a wide variety of people, both friendly and hostile.
- Establish and maintain effective and cooperative relations with those contacted during the course of work.
- Communicate using mobile radio/telephone equipment.

- Read maps and locate addresses in the field.
- Use computerized equipment in recording daily work activities.
- Understand and follow written and oral instructions.

Animal Control Officer (in addition to the above):

- Work alone in the field.
- Issue warnings and citations.
- Use a firearm to tranquilize animals.
- Use computerized equipment for record keeping and report writing.
- Analyze situations and uses good judgment in the enforcement of animal control and anti-cruelty laws.
- Work with all sizes and types of animals during the course of work.
- Assist in back-up and special task force operations related to animal disaster or safety situations.
- Conducts investigations and prepares written reports.
- Testifies in hearings or in court.

EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE:

Education, training, and/or experience, which would likely demonstrate the knowledge, skills and abilities stated above. Examples of qualifying education/experience are:

Animal Control Officer Trainee:

1. Six (6) months of experience handling and caring for domestic animals, or dealing with the public in a service related capacity; OR,
2. Six (6) months of experience as an Animal Care Attendant with the County of San Diego; OR,
3. Possession of Registration as a Veterinary Technician; OR,
4. Completion of at least thirty (30) semester college units from an accredited college or university with coursework related to animal control, law enforcement, or criminal justice.

Animal Control Officer:

1. One (1) year as an Animal Control Officer Trainee with the County of San Diego; OR,
2. One (1) year of experience as a humane officer or animal control officer at a humane society or animal control agency.

SPECIAL NOTES, LICENSES, OR REQUIREMENTS:

License:

This class requires possession of a valid California Class C driver's license, which must be maintained throughout employment in this class, or the ability to arrange transportation for field travel. Employees in this class may be required to use their personal vehicle.

Training:**Animal Control Officer Trainee:**

Employees must complete a certified Penal Code 832 course in arrest and firearms before the end of their probationary period. Employees who do not complete the required training shall be terminated before, or at the end of probationary period.

Animal Control Officer:

Must have completed a certified Penal Code 832 course in arrest and firearms.

Firearms Qualifications:**Animal Control Officer:**

Must obtain firearms proficiency to use tranquilizer gun prior to completion of probationary period and must maintain firearms proficiency thereafter.

Working Conditions:

Works irregular shifts, weekends and holidays. Subject to standby, callback and reassignment to any animal shelter as needed.

Uniform Requirements:

A uniform is required, and an initial allowance is paid within 60 days of hire. An annual uniform allowance is provided.

Physical Requirements:

Performs prolonged driving and intermittent strenuous, physical activity including standing, walking, and running over rough or uneven terrain. Handles a wide variety of animals. Frequently catches, restrains, lifts or carries domestic animals weighing up to 75 pounds. Assists in the capture or removal of large animals and livestock.

Background Investigation:

Felony and misdemeanor convictions may be disqualifying depending on number, severity, and recency. Applicants will be subject to a thorough background check.

Probationary Period:

Incumbents appointed to permanent positions in this class shall serve a probationary period of 12 months (Civil Service Rule 4.2.5).